

REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the amendments to the claims and the following remarks. In the Office action mailed August 25, 2004, claims 1-6, 9-14 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,524,514 to Hadaway et al. ("Hadaway"). Claims 8 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hadaway. Claim 7 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

Claims 1-6 and 8

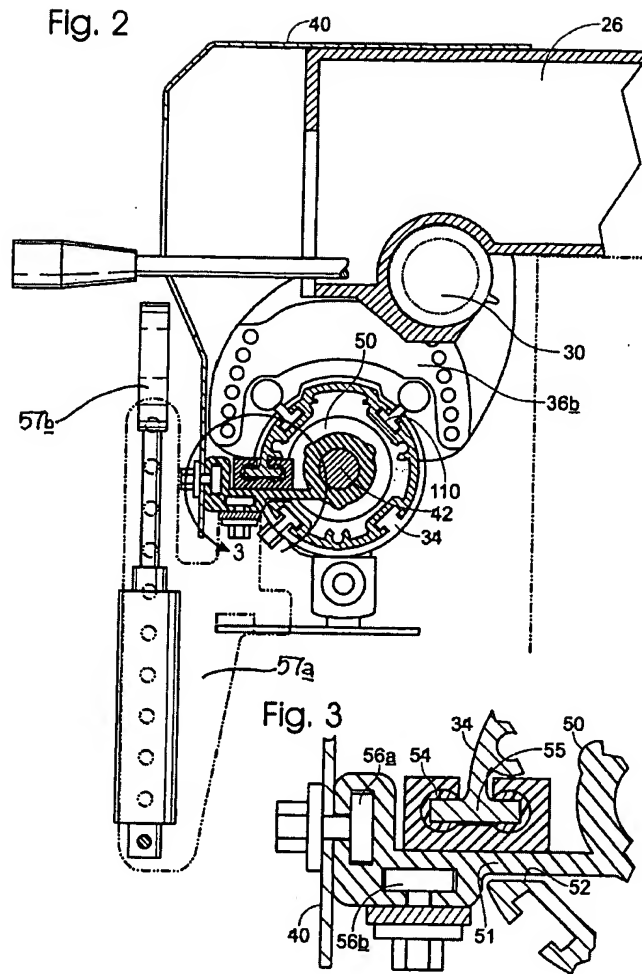
Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating the allowability of dependent claim 7 as originally presented. Applicant has cancelled claim 7, and has amended claim 1 to include all of the limitations of claim 7. Claim 1 is therefore in condition for allowance. Claims 2-6 and 8 depend from claim 1, and are therefore allowable for the same reasons as amended claim 1.

Claims 9-15

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,524,514 to Hadaway. Claim 9 has been amended to recite:

9. A linear positioning system for guiding a rip fence structure on a table saw comprising
 - a rail assembly including a threaded rod substantially enclosed in a cylindrical housing having a longitudinal opening *adjacent to a longitudinal track*,
 - a carriage configured to move back and forth along the threaded rod and longitudinal track *without contacting any other internal surface inside the cylindrical housing*, and
 - a rigid coupling device connecting the carriage to the fence structure so that movement of the carriage along the threaded rod and longitudinal track causes corresponding movement of the fence structure.

Support for the amendment can be found in Figs. 2-3, as shown below, and at page 4, lines 19-22 of the specification, which recites that the "carriage 50 move[s] smoothly on a single rail portion 55 without contacting any other internal surface inside positioning guide rail 34." This configuration allows the positioning system to "operate with significantly less friction making the device more efficient to operate and less expensive to produce compared to prior positioning systems." See page 4, line 22 to page 5, line 2.



Hadaway discloses a computer controlled table saw fence that includes a threaded rod 2, a housing 8, and a carriage 7 mounted on the threaded rod and movable within the housing, as shown in Figs. 2 and 3 below. Specifically, the internal top wall and each of the internal side walls of the housing 7 each include a track, and the bottom of the housing includes an opening (see Fig. 3). The carriage 7 has three sets of wheels 10, where one set of wheels is attached to the top of the carriage, and the other two sets of wheels are attached to the sides of the carriage. Each set of wheels 10 engages a corresponding one of the housing's internal tracks, so that the carriage 7 can roll back and forth within the housing 8 as the carriage is moved along the threaded rod 2 by a motor. See column 2, lines 16-29. The carriage 7 is also includes a portion that extends through the opening in the bottom of the housing, and is attached to a fence 12 by a bracket 11 (Seed Fig. 3).

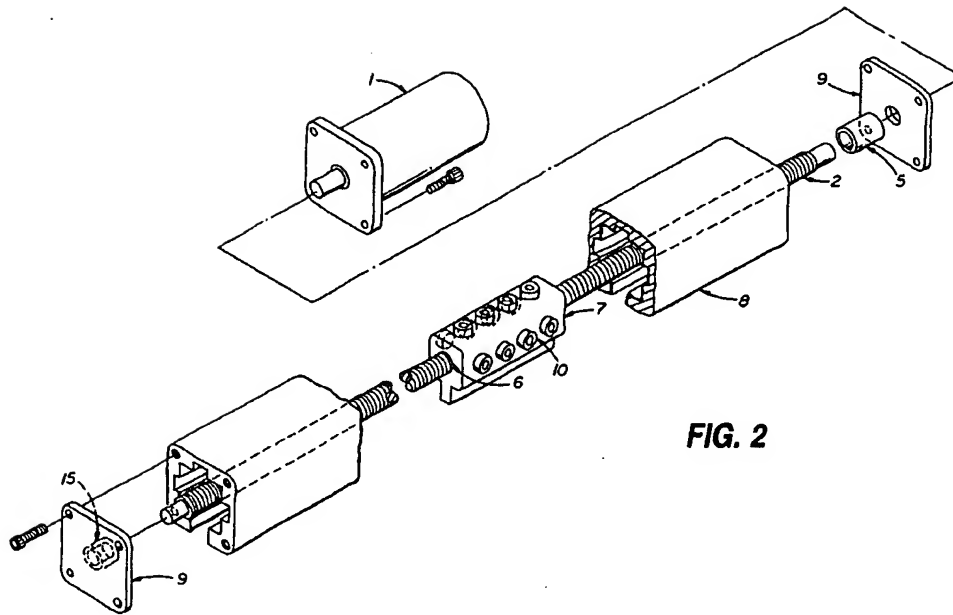


FIG. 2

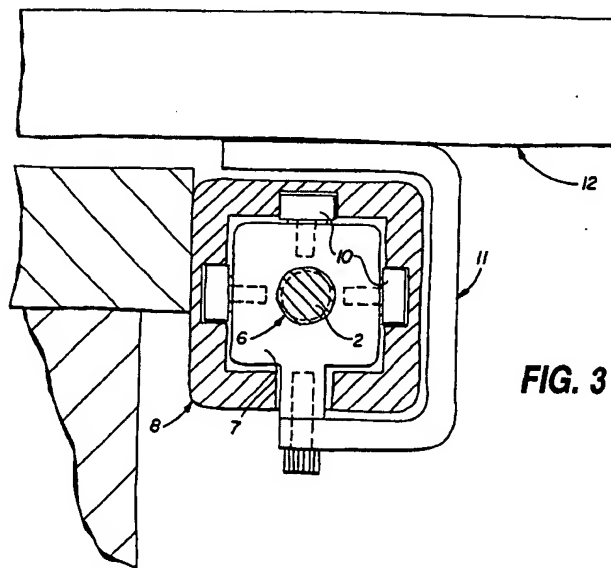


FIG. 3

Hadaway does not teach or suggest each and every element of claim 9. Hadaway first does not teach or suggest a housing having a longitudinal opening "adjacent to a longitudinal track." Hadaway also does not disclose a carriage configured to move back and forth along the threaded rod and longitudinal track "without contacting any other internal surface inside the cylindrical housing." Rather, Hadaway discloses three internal tracks that are each positioned on separate internal walls than (i.e. at a distance from) the opening in the bottom of the housing, and a carriage 7 that makes contact via wheels 10 with the internal surface of the housing at multiple locations.

Each of these contact points generate frictional forces that cause the Hadaway positioning system to be less efficient to operate, and more expensive to produce. Hadaway therefore does not teach or suggest each and every element of amended claim 9, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 12-15 depend from claim 9, and are therefore allowable for the same reasons as amended claim 9.

Claim 16

Claim 16 also stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of Hadaway. Claim 16 has been amended for clarification to recite:

16. A linear positioning system for guiding a rip fence structure on a table saw comprising

a rail assembly including a threaded rod substantially enclosed in a cylindrical housing having a longitudinal opening adjacent a T-shaped track,

a carriage configured to move back and forth along the rail assembly, the carriage having a threaded portion mounted on the rod, and a flange portion extending through the opening to the outside of the housing, the flange portion having a T-slot configured to permit smooth sliding of the carriage on the T-shaped track of the housing, *wherein the only contact between the housing and carriage is along the T-shaped track*, and

a rigid coupling device connecting the carriage to the fence structure so that movement of the carriage along the threaded rod causes corresponding movement of the fence structure.

Hadaway does not teach or suggest each and every element of original claim 16. As similarly discussed above with respect to amended claim 9, Hadaway does not teach or suggest a housing having a longitudinal opening *adjacent to a longitudinal track*, let alone a *T-shaped track*. Hadaway also does not disclose a carriage that moves back and forth along the threaded rod and longitudinal track "*wherein the only contact between the rail assembly and carriage is along the T-shaped track.*" Rather, Hadaway discloses three internal tracks that are each positioned on separate internal walls than (i.e. at a distance from) the opening in the bottom of the housing, and a carriage 7 that makes contact via wheels 10 with the internal surface of the housing at multiple locations. Each of these contact points generate frictional forces that cause the Hadaway positioning system to be less efficient to operate, and more expensive to

produce. Hadaway therefore does not teach or suggest each and every element of amended claim 16, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 17-18

Claims 17-18 are new claims that have yet to be examined. Claim 17 recites:

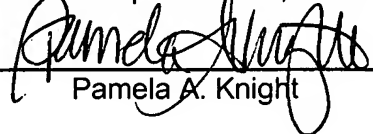
17. A linear positioning system for guiding a rip fence structure on a table saw comprising
a rod substantially enclosed in a cylindrical housing having at least one longitudinal track,
a carriage configured to move back and forth along the rod *and a single longitudinal track of the housing*,
a rigid coupling device connecting the carriage to the fence structure so that movement of the carriage along the threaded rod and the single longitudinal track causes corresponding movement of the fence structure.

Claim 17 is patentable over Hadaway. As discussed above, Hadaway discloses a positioning system having a housing with three internal tracks, and a carriage with three sets of wheels. Each set of wheels engages one of the three the tracks so that the carriage can roll back and forth within the housing. Therefore, Hadaway does not disclose a positioning system having a carriage that moves back and forth along "a single longitudinal track of the housing." Therefore claim 17 should be allowed. Claim 18 depends from claim 17 and is therefore allowable for the same reason.

Applicants believe that, for at least the above reasons, all of the pending claims are patentable and are now in condition for allowance. Please contact applicant's attorney if there are any additional issues to address.

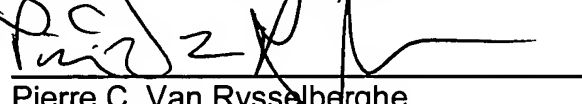
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